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**TIDAL BREAKUP OF THE NUCLEUS OF COMET
SHOEMAKER-LEVY 9: A REVIEW**

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The breakup of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 is discussed both in the context of splitting as a cometary phenomenon, comparing this object with other split comets, and as an event with its own idiosyncrasies. The physical appearance of the comet is described, features diagnostic of the nature of the tidal disruption are identified, and the implications for modelling the event are spelled out. Also discussed is secondary fragmentation, documenting a continuing disintegration during 1992-94. Much attention is paid to the controversies that concern the models of a strengthless agglomerate versus a discrete cohesive mass and involve a variety of estimates for the dimensions of the progenitor object and its major fragments.